

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and computer-based printing system enable a user of a computer to send an image file to a host computer and subsequently to a printer for printing while ensuring that the user is able to retrieve the printed document without other individuals having access to the printed document. More particularly, in response to receiving a print request from a user terminal, stores the image data with a unique job number, sends the job number to the terminal computer and this terminal computer displays the job number to the user. The user may then enter the displayed job number and password on an operation unit of any printer selected by the user, and in response, the host computer downloads the stored image data associated with the inputted job number to the selected printer and the selected printer prints the document. Other individuals are prevented from viewing the printed document because only the intended recipient (i.e., the user who originated print job) knows the user's password and job number and because the intended recipient is located at the printer and can "guard" the printed document from being viewed by other people.

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